

STATE OF ALASKA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION AND PUBLIC FACILITIES

REGIONAL DIRECTOR, CENTRAL REGION

TONY KNOWLES, GOVERNOR

4111 AVIATION AVENUE
P.O. BOX 196900
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA 99519-6900
(TDD 269-0674)
(907) 269-0770 (FAX 269-0775)

May 3, 1999

RE: Bristol Bay Native Association
Resolutions 99-29 & 99-33

Terry Hoefflerle
Chief of Operations
Bristol Bay Native Association
P.O. Box 3 10
Dillingham, Alaska 995 19-6900

Dear Mr. Hoefflerle:

Thank you for your March 31, 1999 letter forwarding the Department two Bristol Bay Native Association (BBNA) Resolutions. Resolution No. 99-29 pertains to the minimum lengths of Bristol Bay airports, and Resolution No. 99-33 addresses a proposed Lower Alaska Peninsula Road System. We understand that the resolutions were provided to the Department out of BBNA concern for the social, economic and cultural well being of the people who reside in the Bristol Bay Region.

With respect to Resolution No. 99-29, it is clear that BBNA would prefer that all the existing Bristol Bay Region airports be extended to a minimum length of 5000 feet. The resolution presents very cogent arguments supporting this position. Your resolution was correct in pointing out that 24 Bristol Bay Region airports currently have runways less than 5000 feet in length. Unfortunately, there are many legitimate aviation improvement needs statewide that compete for limited aviation funds. In general, safety considerations dictate that the Department's priority be for upgrading runways to minimum standards prior to lengthening runways beyond those standards.

We will, however, continue to work with you to extend individual Bristol Bay Region airport runways when, and where, specific local community circumstances justify such action. To date, four Bristol Bay Region airport extension projects have been evaluated by the Department's Aviation Project Evaluation Board (APEB), specifically Clarks Point, Egegik, New Stuyahok, and Pilot Point. The Egegik Airport Runway Extension and Resurfacing Project is scheduled in the Department's Aviation Improvement Program (AIP) Spending Plan for funding in the year 2002. The other three airport extension projects are currently scheduled in the AIP Spending Plan for funding in the year 2003 or beyond. Resolution No. 99-29 will be helpful in documenting BBNA support for any future Bristol Bay Region runway extension project nominated to the Department for evaluation and scoring.

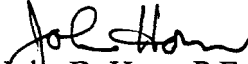
With respect to Resolution No. 99-33, the Department agrees that it is prudent and necessary to analyze the feasibility and advisability of constructing roadway links between the communities of the Lower Alaska Peninsula. Roadway alternatives are being analyzed as part of the Southwest Alaska Regional Plan.

The Southwest Alaska Plan has been a two-year undertaking that included public involvement throughout the process. The plan is expected to be out in draft this summer. A critical part of the plan is analyses of transportation alternatives for Southwest Alaska, to include land, marine and aviation. That portion of the plan relating to potential roadway links will include, among others, consideration of the possible roadway links between the three Chignik communities (Chignik Bay, Chignik Lake and Chignik Lagoon); Ivanof Bay and Perryville; Port Heiden and the three Chignik communities; and, Perryville and the three Chignik communities.

The Department also agrees that evaluation of environmental impacts is a critical factor in determining the feasibility and advisability of constructing specific roadways. It is standard procedure that all Alaska road projects scheduled for construction in the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) include an analysis of environmental impacts early in the preliminary engineering.

Should you have any questions concerning the above matters or any other Bristol Bay Region transportation need, please feel free to contact your Area Planner, Jack Melton. Jack's telephone number is (907) 269-0509.

Sincerely,


John D. Horn, P.E.
Regional Director

JDM

cc: ✓ Eric Taylor, Planner, Statewide Planning